



STATE REPRESENTATIVE

# Ernest Bailes

Serving House District 18:  
Liberty, San Jacinto and Walker County

Volume 1, Issue 1

85th Legislative Session

January 30, 2017

*Dear Neighbors,*

Thank you so much for the faith you have put in me to serve as your voice in Austin. I take this responsibility very seriously and will work hard on your behalf. It is both my honor and my privilege to serve HD18.

The Austin office is fully staffed and we hope to have our district offices open within a few weeks.

Our goal is that this email and newsletter will be a tool to help keep you informed during the legislative session. Please don't hesitate to reach out and share your concerns, your ideas, and your suggestions with our office.

If you are in or around the Austin area, please stop by your capitol. I look forward to hearing from you.

**God Bless You All and  
God Bless our Great  
State of Texas**



## Welcome to the 85th Legislative Session

Ernest Bailes, IV was sworn in on Tuesday, January 10, 2017 as the new state representative to serve House District (HD) 18. HD 18 includes Liberty, San Jacinto and Walker counties.

Bailes replaces John Otto, who retired from the Legislature after representing HD 18 since 2005.

Following his swearing in, Bailes hit the ground running. To better serve HD 18, Bailes has joined the Texas House Republican Caucus and the Texas Legislative Rural Caucus. The Rural Caucus is a bipartisan group of legislators which meets during session to focus on matters of interest to rural communities in Texas.

Bailes will work to insure a strong, cohesive voice for

our rural area. He continues to have daily meetings with constituents, local elected and civic leaders, school officials, law enforcement and with community and business leaders. Bailes is also working

closely with Texas Department of Criminal Justice, Sam Houston State University, Gulf Coast Trades Center and TxDOT on issues important to residents in the district.



*Rep. Bailes was surrounded by family, friends and supporters as he swore to uphold the duties of the office. His wife, Courtney, and their two sons, Cinco and Rigby were by his side for the occasion.*

## Interested in being an Honorary Page at the Capitol?

Do you know a student that would like to visit us in Austin and learn more about the legislative process? If so, share this info...

Each session, we are allowed to invite 8 children, ages 8-18, to participate in the Honorary Page program. This welcomes young men and women to the capitol to work with the House Sergeant's Office in either a morning shift (8:30 a.m. to noon) or an afternoon shift (1:30 to 5 p.m.) For details or to apply for this program, email our office at: [nick.raymond@house.texas.gov](mailto:nick.raymond@house.texas.gov)

## A Quick Glimpse...

### A Recap of Texas' Biennial Legislature

The Texas Legislature is made up of two houses: The Texas House of Representatives which has 150 members who are elected to two year terms, and The Texas Senate which has 31 members who are elected to four year terms.

The Texas Legislature meets every other year for 140 days in the spring to address many state and local issues, including the state budget for the next biennium. The biennial session begins on the second Tuesday in January of odd numbered years.

Special sessions lasting no longer than 30 days may be called by the governor at any time.

### Priorities for the 85th Legislative Session

This session's legislative priorities include issues such as public education, border security, and passing a balanced

budget.

Representative Bailes has reached out to stake holders concerning these issues but needs to hear from you as well. Often, the best insight is from constituents such as yourself. Please take time to share your thoughts with us.

### Committee Assignments

Legislator's committee assignments are expected to be announced early February. At this time, Representative Bailes does not know what his assignments will be. Until committee assignments are released he continues to work on several different pieces of legislation.

Due to constitutional requirements, Texas legislators can only file and hear bills in committees during the first sixty days of Session.

### Developing Youth Leaders

Youth involvement is something Representative Bailes values deeply. Recently, he accompanied Representative Andrew

Murr (HD 53) in presenting to the Pioneers Youth Leadership program at the 5th Annual State Leadership Forum.

They discussed with over 100 high school students from across our state the importance of being involved with local youth programs that promote leadership, responsibility, and relationship building.

The Pioneers Youth Leadership Program teaches Texas youth how to develop ethical leadership skills and grow to become positive change agents in their local communities.

It was an honor to have direct, thoughtful dialogue with these young leaders about the issues they deem important.

Let us know anytime your group is in Austin and we will work with you to schedule a meeting.

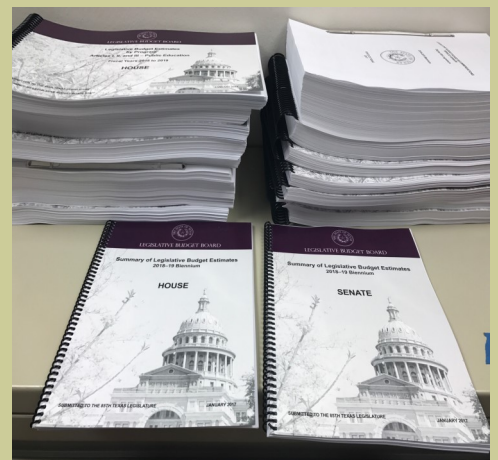
#### A NOTE FROM ERNEST

*As I work on budget numbers for the next biennium, I stay mindful that the money we are working with comes from taxpayers, just like you and I. In 2015, the Legislature passed a budget exceeding \$209 billion, the largest in Texas' history. Now, with the recent volatility in the oil industry there is less tax revenue to work with.*

*The decrease in revenue will be an important factor in budget considerations. However, I am confident we will produce a leaner budget that meets the needs of all Texans. My hope is that issues important to us in HD18 don't end up on the chopping block.*

*Hopefully, the oil industry will regain its momentum, Texans who make their living in the oil industry will be able to get back to work, and all sectors of our state's economy will strengthen.*

*In the meantime, I expect to sharpen a lot of pencils! Ernest*



On February 10, 2015, Josey Scott was struck and killed by a hit-and-run driver while she was jogging along FM 2666 in Shepherd, San Jacinto County.

The driver who hit Josey fled the scene of the accident. Later he was arrested, tried, and found guilty of the second-degree felony of Failure to Stop and Render Aid Resulting in Death. He was sentenced to 19 years and is eligible for parole much sooner. Josey was just 19 years old when she was struck and killed.

Since her death, family and friends have worked diligently to promote hit-and-run awareness and honor her memory through scholarships in her name.

Funds recently raised at *The Annual Muddin' for Josey* event allowed the "Justice for Josey" group to donate \$26,000 to scholarships for graduating seniors in Tarkington ISD, Liberty Co., and Shepherd ISD, San Jacinto Co. This is the second year scholarships will be presented.



## HB 1028 Filed: Promoting Hit-and-Run Awareness

To further the discussion concerning laws surrounding Hit-and-Run awareness, Representative Bailes filed House Bill (HB) 1028.

HB 1028 will designate FM 2666 in San Jacinto County as the Josey Scott Memorial Highway and erect markers at each end of the highway.

HB 1028 will have no direct impact on residents living on FM 2666. FM 2666 will be "designated," not renamed and will not require local residents to change their addresses.

Understanding the importance of engaging in positive dialogue which will address the issue of Hit-and-Run Awareness, Rep. Bailes will work with other legislators to ensure the consistency of our laws and remove any and all legal incentives for fleeing the scene.

Everyone involved is appreciative of the support local residents and law enforcement have offered in the hope that the bill will increase public awareness of this important issue.

## Just A Few of the Issues We are Working On:

### PUBLIC SCHOOL RATINGS:

Working with local School Superintendents to address the new A-F state rating system.

### FIRST RESPONDERS/CONCEALED CARRY:

Working on legislation that allows first responders who are lawfully carrying a fire arm to enter gun free zones and render emergency aid without the fear of citation.

### WALKER COUNTY COURT AT LAW:

Working with stake holders in Walker County on a local clean-up bill.

### SAFE ROADS:

Working with TxDOT on roads and highways in HD18 that have a history of safety issues.



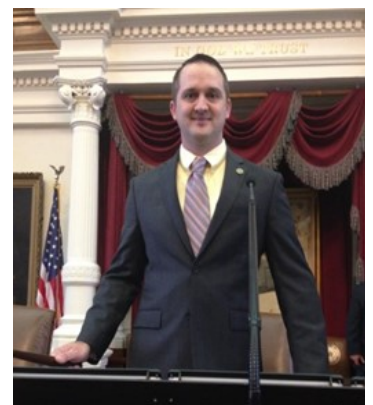
It is always good to see constituents in Austin. Bill Buchanan with KSHN.



Congratulations to Representative John Otto on his retirement.



Meeting with Governor Abbott to discuss issues impacting HD18.



Serving as Speaker of the Day to lead his colleagues in their daily business.



## **STAFF CONTACT**

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*\*Information on Walker  
and Liberty  
County satellite offices  
to follow*

***Our Staff is here to serve you. Don't hesitate to give us a call.  
We look forward to hearing from you.***



(L-R) Nick Raymond-Chief of Staff, Alex Chartier-Intern/Sam Houston State University, Jordyn Senkirik-Legislative Aide, Representative Bailes, Sadie McLaughlin-District Director and Roel Benavides-Legislative Director

### **I VALUE and NEED YOUR FEEDBACK:**

Please take a few moments  
to tell me about the issues  
that affect the lives of you  
and your family most.

(Your Name)

(Your Mailing Address)

(City, State, Zip)

(Your Email)

(Your Phone)

Issues or Concerns:

Complete and mail to Austin or mail/drop off at our Shepherd office.  
email to: [District18.bailes@house.texas.gov](mailto:District18.bailes@house.texas.gov)